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Angel E. Carlin is a Psychology major with a minor in Art from Silver Spring, MD. After graduation in December 2014, Carlin plans to get a Master's degree in Education and Social Work. She then hopes to become a school social worker and incorporate art therapy and the engaging of contemplative practices into working with middle and high school aged students. Carlin's research interests include black feminism and literature, body image and positivity, theological content and the quality of education and mental/social health for under resourced students of color. Carlin's other research includes a current study that looks at the perception and awareness of black feminism among HBCU students.

## The Psychology of Black Women and Feminine Identity

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### Abstract

Over the course of an academic semester, students enrolled in the Black Psychology course explored various components regarding the composition of the cognitive processing, sociocultural awareness, and behavioral functioning of African Americans within a Eurocentric and patriarchal society. The assignment was to analyze any personally resonating aspect of black psychology by utilizing both outside texts and course materials as references that support the student's thoughts in a critical format. In focusing on the placement of black women in America, this scholarly note examines influences related to one's exhibition of sexuality and self through a historical lens which provides the basis of understanding the rate of feminine expression and how it may flourish or be suppressed by the individual. Examples of situations in which specific factors influence identity are included to provide critical insight. The points discussed in the piece attempt to use the knowledge of past circumstances to help better understand the similarities between current issues and future nuances in the way in which blackness is assessed and expressed within society. The paper also looks into the severity of these issues, how they are understood within the black community and how the mental health of African Americans is studied in empirical research.

### Key Terms:

- African Americans
- Identity
- Slavery
- Feminism
- Psychology
- Women